

# Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation

*The largest funding source for civil legal aid organizations in the Commonwealth*

## **NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: MASSACHUSETTS IMMIGRATION LEGAL ASSISTANCE FUND**

**Submission Deadline: January 13<sup>th</sup> 2020 by 5:00 p.m.**

MLAC will be managing the RFP process through its Online Grantee System

**Note:** Alternative formats for persons with disabilities will be available upon request.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

This overview is intended to assist applicants with the RFP process and introduce the focus of the Massachusetts Immigration Legal Assistance Fund. Please read this RFP carefully, to determine whether your organization is eligible and your proposed work aligns with the criteria outlined in this document. The criteria, as well as each applicant's demonstrated expertise to achieve outcomes, will be the basis upon which all funding decisions are made.

The Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation has received a \$1,300,000 grant to provide legal assistance to vulnerable immigrant communities throughout Massachusetts. MLAC is accepting proposals for funding over two years through the MILAF. This is a competitive grant opportunity for non-profit, legal aid organizations to build on immigration defense capacity and address a vast array of legal assistance needs of vulnerable immigrant populations as a result of shifting U.S. immigration policies.

### **II. KEY DATES**

<b>Request for Proposals Massachusetts Immigration Legal Assistance Fund</b>	
<b>Grant Period: February 2020 – January 2022</b>	
Notice of Funding Availability	December 13 <sup>th</sup> 2019
RFP Available Online	December 13 <sup>th</sup> 2019
Proposal Submission Deadline	January 13 <sup>th</sup> 2020 at 5:00 p.m.
Announcement of Grant Awards	February 2020

\*All dates are subject to change at the discretion of MLAC. Please check the MLAC website for the latest schedule.

### **III. FUND OVERVIEW**

MLAC is pleased to announce the availability of grant funds to support Massachusetts non-profit legal aid organizations in providing immigrants legal aid services through direct services, capacity building, convening, resource development and technical assistance. In response to unmet needs in the field, MILAF is focused on providing funding to organizations that serve to fill the gaps within immigration services to targeted immigrant populations (e.g. immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, etc.), who are now or are expected to be adversely affected by shifting U.S. immigration policies. MILAF's aim is to protect and defend the rights of vulnerable immigrant communities to stay in the United States safely and with the promise of a stable future.

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Anticipated activities that will be funded include, but are not limited to:

- a. Direct legal services to individuals or groups of clients in the targeted population.
- b. Community education for clients or staff of organizations serving clients, e.g. Know Your Rights trainings.
- c. Systemic advocacy at the local, state or national level, e.g. legislative advocacy, advocacy with government agencies.

## IV. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Funding is open to all Massachusetts-based nonprofit, legal aid organizations that have programs that align with the RFP's criteria. To be eligible for a MILAF grant:

- Organizations must qualify as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code that is a "Public Charity" as described by Section 509(a)(1) or (2) of the Code.
- Nonprofit, legal aid organizations
- Organizations must have a board of directors composed of both attorneys and consumers of legal services.
- Assist clients regardless of immigration status.

## V. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Proposals submitted will be asked to respond to the following:

**1. Organizational Overview** – Provide a description of your organization's mission and core work.

**2. Proposal Narrative** – Provide a description of the work you do to provide legal aid and other services for immigrants.

- **Proposal Description:** Provide a description of your proposed work and desired impact. What are the key, immediate and long-term outcomes your organization aspires to achieve to benefit clients served? How will the proposed work meet the fund's criteria? How has your organization addressed the capacity and delivery of service needs in the most recent year?
- **Description of Need:** State the unmet need for services you plan to address. Which immigrant demographic(s) do you plan to serve? What gap areas will be addressed?
- **Geographic Service Area:** Please describe the geographic area your proposed services will cover.
- **Learning and Evaluation:** Describe the organizational approach to learning and evaluation. How will you know if you have achieved your desired impact? Describe your data collection and analysis strategies.

**3. Required Documents**

- Most recent IRS Form 990
- Organizational Chart
- List of Current Board of Directors and professional affiliations
- Detailed Proposal Budget– a template will be provided through the online application.
- Organizational Budgets for the Last, Current, and Next Fiscal Years
- Most recent Audited Financial Statements

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## VI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Grantees are expected to submit an interim and final report on the grant in accordance with the reporting schedule and specific guidelines provided in advance of the reporting due dates. Reports shall include updated financials, a brief progress summary of programmatic goals, and case data collection.

**Please Note:** MLAC's case data collection reporting requirements (including case narratives) will include all immigration cases open and closed during the grant period, not just those funded by this grant. Deadlines and a complete list of all the data fields will be available as part of the formal online application. Grantees will be required to provide the following for every immigration case open and closed during the grant period:

- General case information
- Cases open at the start of the grant period, and cases opened and closed during the grant period.
- Specific case-type information
- Client information and demographics; and
- Closed case information including the level of service provided and outcomes.

Grantees proposing to deliver services in addition to, or other than, case handling will be required to provide data regarding those activities. For example, a proposal to deliver community education events will be required to track and report event dates, titles, subject matter, and attendance.

## VII. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Grant proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria, as well as criteria in Section IV and V above:

- Ability to meet geographic diversity, to address the funds goals in filling unmet needs.
- Clarity of program description and program activities, including steps to be taken to achieve desired outcomes.
- Organizational capacity to implement the program – including staffing, leadership, operational and fiscal management.
- Ability to engage in collaborative efforts with other organizations and contribute content-area knowledge to the field.
- Ability to demonstrate and operationalize organizational commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Meaningful benchmarks and indicators to measure outcomes and progress.
- Established track record in specific proposal content area or potential to achieve needed content expertise.

## VIII. AWARD INFORMATION

The award period is for two years. An average range of \$50,000 - \$75,000 per award annually is expected to be distributed during this 2020-2022 grantmaking cycle. Budget requests for the two years must not exceed \$150,000, for the use of the requested funds, and applicants should include a budget narrative that makes clear the necessity of the program's specific line-items.

## IX. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

A review committee will evaluate all requests for proposals. In addition, applicants may receive a telephone call and/or other type of communication from MLAC staff as part of the proposal review process.

## X. CONTACT INFORMATION

For assistance with this RFP, questions should be directed to Shamika Naidu, MLAC's Grants Manager at [snaidu@mlac.org](mailto:snaidu@mlac.org) or 617-391-5658.